# LONG ISLAND **FORUM**



Civil War Monument and American Legion Building, Southold. (Story page 225) Painted and Etched by Di Gemma

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## LONG ISLAND

FODUM Published Monthly at

AMITYVILLE, N. Y. FOR LONG ISLANDERS EVERYWHERE

Entered as second-class matter May 31, 1947, at the post office at Amityville, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

PAUL BAILEY, Publisher-Editor Contributing Editors

Clarence A. Wood, LL.M., Ph.D. Malcolm M. Willey, Ph.D. John C. Huden, Ph.D.

#### Up-state Long Islanders

Altho I have never seen Long Island it seems like homeland to me since reading so many interesting stories about the island and also since my g.g.g.g. grandfather Abraham Howell emigrated from Wales in the early days and settled at Southampton. He was accidentally killed while hunting on the island "as he shoved his gun into a cart" Some of his family emigrated to Morris Co., N. J. about 1770. But I do not know whether or not any of his descendants are now living on L. I.

In going thru my file of Forums to reread Dr. Woods' articles after learning of his marriage to my friend the former Mrs. Grace Lane, I came across a letter concerning towns named after Long Islanders. This little village of Ludlowville Lansing, Tompkins County. N. Y. was named for Henry Ludlow 1743. He emigrated from Southampton in 1791.

This section of western New York State is in the so-called Military Tract which George Washington gave to Revolutionary soldiers in lieu of pay. Some of the soldiers came and settled on their lots but many sold to whoever would buy their grants. Henry Ludlow bought 600 acres from a soldier for \$60. His wife was Hannah Cooper, sister of Judge Cooper and aunt of Fenimore and they lived here with their 10 children for many years before going on farther west

I have some history of other families who emigrated to this section from Long Island in the early days. One such pioneer was Jonah Tooker. His son Manley who be-came a Methodist preacher wrote a book describing his life and travels.

Another early settler was Capt. Benajah Strong. He was a Revolu-tionary soldier born in 1740. Just recently I visited the Strong Family burying ground in this township of Lansing to copy the inscrip'ions and there found the oldest grave in the township, that of "Jane Strong daughter of Benajah and Jane Strong who died Sept.

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## Com the Blacksnake

I MUST have an affinity for blacksnakes, or they for me, because whenever a snake crosses my path, it will be a blacksnake.

There is a snapshot in one of the family albums showing me holding the head of a black-snake toward the camera and the rest of the snake coiled about my neck. The picture is dated in 1915 at a boys' camp in Maine upon the visit of a lecturer touring summer camps with an exhibition of snakes. I'll never forget the creepy, sickening sensation of that snake gathering and slackening around my neck.

In a greenhouse I saw a 'hose' stretched along a walk apparently draining into the heat-pipe trench. Somehow it did not look exactly like a hose and soon it slowly slid over into the trench. Another black-snake! That one stayed around the greenhouse property several years and he frequently showed up in outdoor plantings or basked in the sun on a lumber pile.

The third blacksnake should be called a friend for among the very, very few people who know him he is referred to as "Tom". I believe we enjoy the proper name, it suggests a bit of individuality.

I met Tom for the first time on a Saturday morning last May. I had taken one of these articles for Paul Bailey to the beach to knock it together. In a fold of a dure I keep a thick grass mat and upon it I spread my blanket, sat down, lighted a cigarette and started to work. Something slipped and squirmed beneath nie and I sprang up. Tom slid out from under the mat and took off over the dune and into a bayberry thicket. I have never again found Tom under my mat - I look first - but I Julian Denton Smith

Editor's Note

Julian Denton Smith is secretary treasurer of the Nassau County Historical Society, president of the Long Island Chapter, S. of A. R., and editor of the Long Island Horticultural Society. His stories on the island's natural history are well known to our readers.

know he goes there because other animals gather under the mat, little animals that he likes to eat.

It seems to me that one good meal will hold Tom for several days as there are times when all he seems to do is lie in the sun. Then little mice run close to him and he does not appear to see them. There is a big piece of timber, a beam 16 x 16. a few hundred feet from my mat. When Tom is hunting food he will show up at the beam many times a day and will wait around the openings to the mice tunnels under the timber. Sometimes he pokes his head inquisitively into a tunnel entrance. This action excites the mice and one may run out into the open. Tom will usually catch the mouse

as it scampers back to the tunnel.

I saw Tom grab a young warbler one day in June. The bird had stopped momentarily on a low branch at the edge of a patch of beach plums. I had no idea Tom lurked anywhere in the vicinity, in fact I had not even thought of him, when suddenly there was a violent disturbance - a foot of twisting blacksnake showed at the spot where the bird had been and the bird struggled wildly on the sand. I do not know how Tom devoured the warbler, just what was his technique, for when the struggle slowed. Tom slid away into the darkness of the bushes dragging the hird in his mouth

Tom seems to be entirely alone. I have never found another snake, black or otherwise, on that part of the beach where I can depend upon seeing him. I have never been able to locate Tom in the evening or at night, and I have used up two pair of flashlight batteries in the attempt. He is an early riser for I have seen him sneaking up on mice be-



The Road to Jones Beach in Winter Beside the Wantagh Parkway

fore the sun has shown above the horizon.

Tom has certain definite places where he hunts. He has worn no path between the locations but when he leaves one I can usually tell, by the general direction he takes, at which place I may next run across him. He is a big snake - a bit over five feet - and as he wriggles through the beach grass, it moves at his pressure and weight. Tom's next stop from my mat is most often the ship's timber, the big beam. I try to get there before he does in order to watch his arrival. He frequently dawdles along the way and I



Jones Beach Coast Guard Station

sit down on a dune and spot the telltale rippling of the beach grass as he makes his way through it. He goes on next to an old water hole, probably a caved-in cistern. I have never seen him drink, but occasionally there will be a frog or a bird at the water hole.

Tom never seems to sun himself on hot sand. He likes wood or pine needles under his belly while the sun beats down on him. Perhaps he does not travel over wet sand for I only find his tracks in dry. I do not believe he goes on the beach proper, that is the strand the space between the southernmost dunes and the surf. He always seems to be back among the dunes.

I found one of his cast-off skins in a pile of discarded chunks of concrete and macadam from an old road. This location was far from his usual haunts. He had apparently come there that the roughness of the materials might help

him pull out of his old skin. One thing about that old skin surprised me - it had no holes for the eyes. Where the eyes had been the skin carried discshaped transparencies. I guess that is why Tom never blinks: he can't, because the skin fits tightly over his eyes in place of evelids and serves as a sort of guard or protective plate.

Numerous times I have had to engage absolute strangers in sparking conversations to keep them from discovering Tom and possibly harming him. Men and women have

walked into his domain and within a few feet of him. They must wonder what sort of a phoney I am to suddenly rush up to them and greet them and gently hurry them on their way again. Sometimes I feel I have been terribly crude at the effort, but Tom is still alive

I have never observed Tom actually at his dinner table, eating, so one Friday 1 set his table for him. I caught a good big toad in the low ground of the park between Wantagh

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## General Woodford, Long Islander

CUSTOMER in a roadside country store on present Route 25, between Peconic and Cutchogue, more than a century ago saw a very small boy standing on a chair in the backyard and declaiming vigorously. The boy's name was Stewart Lyndon Woodford, born September 3, 1835, and at the time of incident a pupil at Cutchogue of Miss Mape's private school, known as St. Peters Hall. Thus early in life did one whom Long Island may indeed call, by descent and deed, its very own, practise the art of oratory of which in mature years he was to become a past-

The store, still functioning, was then owned and conducted by Hutchinson H. Case, an organizer and executive of the Suffolk County Mutual Insurance Company, also secretary of the Southold Commoners (Forum June 1950). In Case's home for a time with her student son lived Susan Terry Woodford who stemmed from Richard Terry, one of the early settlers of Southold town. serving once as its recorder. Susan Terry had married Josiah Curtiss Woodford of New York City, a descendant of Thomas Woodford who settled in Massachusetts in 1635. During the years she and her son spent much time in Southold and vicinity, visiting relatives and friends, including Josiah Albertson at Cutchogue and Rensselaer T. Goldsmith.

She was a sister of the grandmother of Stewart Woodford Horton, late of Cutchogue and also of the first wife of David Billard of that village. There was also a maiden sister Lucinda who with Susan Woodford and son often visited in the home of the Albertson family.

Stewart Woodford in young manhood graduated at Columbia College as valedictorian of

Dr. Glarence Ashton Wood
Editor's Note

Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood, rectant forty years in research work for the State Court of Appeals, before becoming a contributing editor of the Forum. A native of Setauket, he is an authority on Southold Town history.

his class. Subsequently during three years he prepared himself for the legal profession and was licensed in 1857. In April 1861 he received appointment as an assistant United States attorney for the southern district of New York. During the summer of 1862 he and his mother spent considerable time at Peconic and Cutchogue.

That summer after General McClellan's peninsular campaign when President Lincoln made his second call for volunteers Woodford, then twentyseven, resigned his civil office and began a recruiting campaign in eastern Suffolk County. Everywhere young men were aroused by his stirring appeals to patriotism. At a meeting at the Old First Church of Southold they gathered from Orient to Mattituck and signed their names to the roll lying on the communion table in front of the pulpit. The meeting had been called by Henry Huntting, son of Rev. Jonathan Huntting, who had served that church and others of the North Fork during more than four decades. One of the signers was Henry Huntting's nephew, Edward Foster Huntting, who gave his life in the service of the nation early in the war. His name has been memorialized in that of the Edward F. Huntting Post, G. A. R.

Woodford himself enlisted as a private, was made captain by election of his fellows, and lieutenant colonel by Governor Morgan. Later he became a brigadier-general. The Southold town recruits calling themselves The Monitors, became officially Co. H. of the 127th Regiment, N. Y. Volunteers. William Gurney of Southampton was colonel of this regiment

The quota of Suffolk County was met and the enrollment completed in September. With other regiments the 127th was detained for two weeks on Staten Island after which they were moved to Baltimore and then to Washington to serve in defense of the capitol.

In the spring of 1863 they were ordered to the field. During the war the regiment participated in several battles. Later it was garrisoned at Charleston, its ranks reduced



Universalist Church, Southold, in Which Woodford Spoke in 1876

by about half from sickness and death. Here at the suggestion of Sidney B. Ritch, "the Singing Soldier" from Port Jefferson, General Woodford procured song books and selected a quartette to conduct songfests.

General Woodford had been a delegate to the national Republican convention at Chicago which in 1860 first nominated Lincoln for President. During the post war period he served as governor of several Southern states. He later served as lieutenant-governor of New York and as minister to Spain.

In October 1876 General Woodford and Hon. John Alsop King addressed a Republican mass meeting in the Southold Universalist Church near which stands a monument to Woodford's Monitor boys. The General also delivered the address July 4, 1894 at the unveiling of Huntington's Nathan Hale memorial. He was awarded honorary degrees by Columbia, Yale, Trinity, Syracuse and Dickinson colleges.

During the early 1880s a law student in General Woodford's New York office was Charles Evan Hughes, one time governor of New York, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court and unsuccessful candidate for the Presidency. The General died at New York. Feb. 14, 1913 at the age of 77. Following is a partial list of the Southold Monitors: James R. Aldrich, Selden S. Bennett, Andrew J. Bennett, George L. Booth, Horatio N. Booth, Barnabas T. Billard, Zebulon H. Brower, Gilbert A. Brown, Leonard T. Butler, Walter Carpenter, Albert W. Case, A. Wickham Case, Jesse G. Case, John B. Cleveland, John Collins, David T. Conklin, Chatham Corwin, J. Addison Corwin, George Culver.

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#### Indian Pamphlet Useful

I have been wanting to send a note of appreciation concerning your booklet. The Thirteen Tribes. It's the handiest little reference leaflet. One can turn to it for information at a glance without reading whole chapters or searching through indexes for subject matter. Harriet Valentine.

Goose Hill Road, Cold Spring Harbor Note: Mrs. Valentine has written a number of historical articles for the Forum, among them one entitled Indian Troubles in 1681 (Feb-

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## Zopher Hawkins, Indian Captive

A GRAVEYARD seems hardly the place for an interesting tale, but in an old burying ground in South Setauket on a mossy stone, one finds the brief record of a life as exciting as that of many a western pioneer.

Zopher Hawkins was born in 1756 in an old house on the edge of the land now belonging to St. George's Golf Links. In those days the hillsides were dotted with the wigwams of the friendly Setauket Indians, and I imagine Zopher had many good times with them.

One day he was herding cattle near Lake Ronkonkoma when he was captured by hostile Indians. Tradition says they carried him far away, but where no one seems to know. Long and earnest!y did his family search for him; helped no doubt by the Setaukets, but all in vain.

Three years Zopher dwelt among the Indians and they married him to an Indian squaw. At last his charce came. He escaped, guiding himself by the stars as his Indian friends had taught him. When morning was breaking. he crawled into a hollow log. The Indians traced him there. They beat on the log and kicked it but on'y to discover as the enemies of Bruce did long ago that a spider had spun its web across the opening. They then gave up the log in disgust and looked elsewhere.

After nightfall, Zopher very cramped and stiff, crawled out and started on his way. After long traveling he reached home at last, to the joy of all his people.

It was after the beginning of the Revolutionary War, and I think after the Battle of Setauket Green, that word was brought to South Setauket that there were exciting doings down by Setauket pond. Zopher Hawkins who perhaps found life a bit quiet after his

Kate Wheeler Strong

Editor's Note

At the author's request we reprint this story fron, our issue of February 1940 in order that it may be incorporated in her next pamphlet. The pamphlet which contained this story has long been out of print.

In response to several queries, we would here state that George Templeton Strong, whose recently published diary has won such acclaim, was first cousin to Miss Strong's grandfather.

earlier excitements, and his friend Arthur Smith, decided to go down and see what was going on.

They found that a small party of British soldiers, after having landed from a whale-boat, had marched to Tyler's Tavern in search of deserters. This tavern was not the present Community House, but one that used to stard near the road a little further on. The house was later moved up on the hill and still shows the bullet holes made on that occasion.

As the soldiers entered the building, Redfern, a school teacher, rushed upstairs and called to two girls who were sleeping there that they were



safer in bed. He had only come four steps down the stairs when a stray bullet struck and killed him. Two other men were killed and a third escaped by climbing up the great chimney.

Zopher and Arthur were hanging around outside. The British catching sight of them, fired and killed Arthur and as they thought, Zopher. But Zopher had dropped as they fired and lay for dead, an Indian trick. It is said that when the soldiers had gone, he jumped to his feet and ran so fast for home that "you couldn't see his heels for the dust."

Zopher later fought in the Revolution and came through unwounded. It was years before he took a wife and then she was a young girl twentyone years his junior. Her footstove, a nice big one decorated with her initials J. H. and a heart, evidently a wedding present, also the brass warming pan with which she warmed the beds on many a cold night, her flax and wool wheels, and the family chimes of sleigh bells, a different tone for each, are among our present treasures. Father bought them years ago at an auction at the old Hawkins house.

Zopher and his wife Julianer sleep side by side in the quiet graveyard, she having died in 1872. His tombstone reads:

ZOPHER HAWKINS who died Oct. 26, 1847 in the 91st Year of His Age.

He served his country faithfully in the Revolution and was a captive among the Indians three years.

He lived a quiet and peacefull life, was happy and resignned in death.

Northport No Misnomer

In reply to Mrs. Gracie Heddink of Bridgeport, Ct., who calls Northport a misnomer in the November Forum, may I say that according to dictionary definition a port is a harbor or a mercantile city or town under which definition Northport certainly qualifies, judging by the summer yachts it harbors and attracts.

Furthermore, to us Long Islanders it is on the north shore of our island. Southport, Connecticut, however, is on the north shore of Long Island Sound. Why do those Nutmeggers do such things?

Estelle V. Newman, Cold Spring Harbor

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#### Letters From Our Readers

Continued From Page 222

17, 1787, in the 11th year of her age May holy angels guard the clay Until the Resurrection Day."

I wondered if this family could be the same as that of Kate Wheeler Strong. It has long been a mystery to local historians as to why a little girl of 11 should have died and been buried here in the Military Tract so long before the first settlers arrived in 1791.

Susan Howell Haring, Lansing Town Historian, Ludlowville, N. Y.

As to "Banvard's Folly"

Mrs. Estelle V. Newman of Cold Spring Harbor, who wrote the Banvard story for the Forum, received the following letter:

My second cousin Russell Banvard who lives in St. Albans, Long Island, sent me a copy of the May issue of the Long Island Forum, in which the story of "Banvard's Folly" is printed.

I would like to congratulate you on the accuracy of the article, and wonder where you got all of the information. I have some letters and a scrap book that my Aunt Edith, one of John Banvard's daughters, gave me, so that I know the story just about as you wrote it.

To answer your query about Paulette Goddard being a great-granddaughter, that is incorrect. I recollect my Aunt Edith telling me that the Goddard's were neighbors in Watertown, South Dakota, which might be the foundation for this rumer.

As to what became of the big panorama, two stories have been told. My brother, who was old enough to remember when we lived in Watertown, and just before my grandfather died, about 1890, told me that it was in the cellar, and that he, and the other children used to play on it. My Aunt Edith told me that it had been cut up and used for scenery on the New York stage. In any event, it is not in existence.

I lived in Brooklyn, Freeport and

Baldwin, L. I., up to six years ago, at which time I was transferred to the Houston office of my company. Some years ago I went to Cold Spring Harbor and asked the Librarian if she knew where the castle was situated, and she told me, and drew from her desk a copy of the etching which is reproduced in your article. When I went to Mr. Taylor's residence there was nobody home and I pursued that phase of the story no further.

You might be interested in knowing that a ship was named John Banvard in March 1943, in the Baltimore yard of the Bethlehem Ship Building Company, and my daughter Janet christened the ship. I had sent the scrap book and other lit-

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#### Tom the Blacksnake

Continued from page 224

and Bellmore and carried it in a cardboard box to the beach. I waited for Tom to come looking around the mat and I hurried across to the beam and let the toad loose.

Somewhere Tom fooled along his accustomed way and the toad hopped off into the edge of the beach grass out of sight from the beam. At length Tom arrived and slid beside the beam looking for mice. When he neared the point where I had dropped the toad, he immediately turned off on the line the toad had taken. I could see no tracks the toad had made in the dry sand and wonder if it could have been scent the snake detected which pointed him to the toad. Then began one of the most interesting couple of hours I have ever experienced as I watched Tom polish off the toad and then pass out in a sort of stupor.

As Tom moved toward the

toad, the toad made no effort to make off but rather turned slightly to face Tom, seemingly intensely interested in Tom's approach. Tom came right on, snapped open his mouth and instantly the toad's head was in it. Plenty of saliva oozed out on the toad, it literally ran out of Tom's mouth stretched farther and farther to do the apparently impossible task of enveloping the big toad. Tom's head became one enormous mouth as it slowly slipped over the toad's body. In the squeeze the body lost some of its width but the breadth of hips did not lessen. Saliva greased the hips and in a final stretch and press of the mouth the hips were in.

By this time the front of the toad was well beyond Tom's mouth and his body began to swell to accommodate the alive - and - kicking d in n e r. Slowly the bulge moved down into the body of the snake as the mouth closed over the feet. Somehow Tom conveyed the impression that he had made

an extreme effort and had almost killed himself doing so. He definitely planned to go to sleep right then and there practically in the open where anyone could leisurely and surely separate his soul from his body. It looked like a poor place to pass out. So I picked Tom up, grabbing him immediately in back of the head with my right hand and catching the body just beyond the bulge with my left. He was too sleepy to care much about this novel transportation. The lower part of his body wiggled a few times and I felt the cords and muscles tighten and release in my left hand. I put him down beneath a clump of pines.

For the sake of holding the story together I have omitted a near-disaster. As the bulge made its way slowly down Tom's throat I saw a woman coming along the top of the dunes, plodding steadily our way. I had no time to arrange delightful and distracting con-

Continued on Page 237



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#### Letters From Our Readers

Continued from page 228

erature to the Maritime Commission, and requested that the ship be named after him, which was done. That ship did not last long, as it was in several collisions during the war and was finally towed into Jacksonville, Florida, where it was sold for scrap

Jas. G. Banvard. Houston, Texas de de de

#### Peconic, Colorado

On the high plateau of eastern Colorado there is a place with a good old Long Island name-Peconic. It does not seem to be a "station stop" but a siding with headquarters for a section gang, perhaps. There is a small grain elevator there also, but no near habitations. It is on a division of that great western railroad, the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific. The nearest post office is Burlington, Colorado.

Driving east from California through this section the writer desired to find out how this Peconic got its name but "cn the lone prairie" there was no one to ask. However, visions of some Long Islander from Noyack, Flanders or Mattituck going west many years ago on the advice of Horace Greeley, founding a ranch and calling it after our beloved bay-Peconichad been on his mind. No, dear reader, such is not the case.

The State Historical Society of Colorado has no helpful information on the subject, but through the courtesy of the Rock Island Lines the mystery appears to have been solved. Mr. Walter W. Rode, Advertising Manager with offices in Chicago, and his staff, have ferreted out the secret with skill and patience. It is doubtless an example of the helpfulness of all Rock Island people.

Mr. Rode writes: "We have spent quite some time \* \* \* endeavoring to develop the source of the name of Peccnic, Colorado. Our local representative in making inquiries in and around Burlington contacted a resident of that city who had been working on our railroad for many years. He stated that the foreman of the crew that laid the siding at Peconic was laid the of a better name they gave it the name of Peconic as it now stands. I am unable to verify the statement made by the local resi-

Thus the romance which might have attained to the place is diss pated. The facts are probably true as the writer knows of similar instances in the building of the rail-

Continued on next page

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Letters From Our Readers

Continued from page 230

roads across the interminable miles of the Far West. Clarence Russell Comes

Cutchogue

Quitcherkiddin

I appreciate the Forum for, as you well know, pinch pennies like me don't give up with \$2.00 for nothing, unless it's over a bar.

Your Publication is not only intensely interesting but exceedingly instructive for who would have realized until they saw the 1800 picture of Fire Island Inlet in your October issue that our colonial forefathers in that locality could have had the foresight to construct buildings which would be adequate for use one hundred years later.

Hilary Corwin, Huntington
Note: Just the Counselor's unique
way of advising us that the cantion beneath the photograph in
question should not have read 1800
which was some years prior to the
erection of Fire Island's first lighthouse and more than thirty years
before photography came along.
The year was 1880.

\* \* \* Hemlock Inlet

Enclosed find renewal check. Look forward to receiving Forum each month and read it through from cover to cover.

Enjoyed reading the article "South Shore Inlets" (Julian Denter Smith) in October number, and of course remember Hemlock Inlet very well. If my memory serves me correctly, this inlet was washed through on a Christmas eve and turned the old life saving station almost over. Have heard old Capta'n Israel Van Nostrand and Ray Burch, who were there at the time, tell the story.

Hayes Haff, Propr., Ranch Motel, Elizabeth City, N. C.

Little Neck History

An attractive, well illustrated, nicely printed booklet has come to hand. It is entitled The History of Little Neck, and is an interesting account of the life of this northeastern community of Queens County from its first settlement in the 1600's to the present. The place was first called Little Madnan's Neck from the Indian name, Madnan-nock. It was later called Cornbury after the English governor. But according to the booklet, it has been Little Neck since the 1700's.

The booklet is the work of a committee appointed by The Little Neck Community Association and composed of Mrs. Hope Robinson

Continued on next page

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#### Letters From Our Readers

Continued From Page 231

Swenarton, chairman; Henry Trautman, Frank Kirkman, Lester J. Poole, C. Stanley DeBevoise who donated most of the illustrations, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Meissner who edited and checked all copy, and Miss Ida F. Fowler, who compiled the material.

The booklet is available at \$1.00 by addressing Miss Fowler at 44-01 Little Neck Pkway., Little Neck. 张 张 尹

#### Suffolk County Museum

The Museum of the Suffolk County Historical Society at Riverhead is one of the largest institutions of its kind in the whole State of New York. It welcomes visitors charge) from one to five all afternoons except Sundays and holi-days. The custodian, Ernest M. Robinson, on duty during open hours, will be glad to assist school classes and other groups during their visits

Those who desire to become members of the Society may obtain information from Mr. Robinson on the premises or by writing or phoning any of the following: President Paul Bailey, Amityville; First and Second Vice Presidents Roswell Corwin of Augebogue and Mrs. Mary F. Brown of Riverhead; Treasure Miss Rose P. Terry, Reecrding Secretary Mrs. Marjorie W. Sawyer, Corresponding Secretary Miss Ruth Ackerly and Past President John D. Hallock, all of Riverhead.

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Continued on back cover

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#### **Long Island Forum Index**

Index of Long Island Forum, years 1938-47 inclusive. About 40 pages compiled by Miss Marguerite V. Doggett, Librarian L. I. Collection, Queens Borough Public Library, Jamaica 2, N. Y. Done by photo offset process. \$1 postpaid. Order from Miss Doggett.

## John Storrs, Patriot Pastor

A MONG the hundreds of patriotic refugees from revolutionary Long Island, none is more deserving of fame than the Reverend John Storrs, pastor of Southold's First Congregational (Old First) Church. Born in Mansfield, Ct., on December 1, 1735, Pastor John was the eldest son of John Storrs I, and grandson of the noted Samuel Storrs whose name was given to the township which now is graced by the University of Connecticut.

After a troubled, sickly childhood John Storrs II prepared for Yale where he received the Bachelor of Arts degree in 1756. According to Franklin B. Dexter's "Biographical Sketches" of the graduates of Yale College, John later studied theology, but taught for a while at Yale before accepting a regular pastorate.

In the fall of 1762, shortly before his marriage to Mrs. Eunice Howe of Mansfield, Mr. Storrs left Yale; on August 15, 1763 he was installed pastor of the First Church of Southold.

Although dogged by ill health, Pastor Storrs was from the first very successful in his work at "South-Wold". His wife Eunice died March 27, 1767, leaving a son Richard Salter Storrs (Yale 1783) whose descendants have added still more fame to their name, and Southold's. (Richard's great-grandson, the Rev. Dr. Richard Salter Storrs, spoke at the town's 250th anniversary.)

A week before Christmas 1767 Pastor Storrs married Hannah Moore, an illustrious daughter of a pioneer Southood family. (Three sons and three daughters came to bless this union.) Nine years later east end Long Islanders were given the choice of taking an oath of allegiance to King George III. or banishment.

Prof. Arthur F. Tuthill and Dr. John C. Huden

Editor's Note

Professor Tuthill of the University of Vermont (Mechanical Engineering) hails from Cutchogue (as Tuthills very often do) and is a graduate of the Greenport High School. Dr. Huden, Professor of Pedagogy at the same university, President of the Vermont Writers' Association, and for some years a Contributing Editor of the Long Island Forum, is a native of Sag Harbor. Their collaboration on a subject of mutual interest here provides a very worthwhile contribution to island history.

British troops were ordered

into some of the villages of the "East Riding", and the Old First Church of Southold was disrupted for the duration of the Revolution. Among the many patriots who went to Connecticut were Pastor John Storrs and most of his parishioners.

For the next six years (1776-1782) Mr. Storrs made his headquarters on a farm in his native Mansfield, but he was often away from home. He served as chaplain in Colonel Fisher Gay's regiment; he supplied the pulpit of the Congregational Church at Woodstock, Ct. Above all oth-



Horton's Point Light and Coast Guard Station, Southold From Watercolor by Cyril A. Lewis



er endeavors was his incessant work in behalf of his Southold Church members.

Possibly through Samson Occum of Montauk fame, Mr. Storrs learned that the "Independent Republick of Vermont" was making grants of land to prospective settlers. The Manuscript State Papers of Vermont, volume 21, page 108, contain the following entry under date of October 16, 1779:

The Petition of John Storrs of Southold on Nassau Island in Suffolk County and State of New York Clerk humbly Sheweth.

That ye People of ye first Chh and Congregation of Southold being his particular Charge as a minister of ve Gospel generall fled from ye cruel Hand of Tyrany in Sep-tember 1776 Soon after ye troops of ye British King took Possession of ye Island aforesd and left this pleasant Habitation in ye hands of our Comon Enemy and have Suffered ye Loss of all things and are now most of them Scattered abroad suffering great Destress for ye Necessaries of Life having no Land to cultivate to produce ye same and being desirous if possible to provide for my dear distressed Peopl where I might collect them together and minister to them as heretofore and being informed yt there are unsetled Lands in ye State of Ver-Mont Your Petitioner humbly begs yt You wild of your Clemancy kindly Consider him and his distressed People and Grant a Township of Land lying etc. and you will greatly oblige your humble petitioner, John

The names of those who will settle ye above petitioned Town. viz. Gamaliel Baley, Joseph Peck, Tho: Prince, John Prince, John Prince, John Pain, Benjamn. Vail, Jonathan Vail, Jonathan Tuthil, Danl. Tuthil, Abrm. Case, Jonathn. Conkling, John Danes, Ishua Reve, Nathl. Corwin, Jacob Conkling, Thos. More Junr., Calvin More, Silvester Lester, Wilm. Horton, Reek Hoel, Joshua

Horton, Danl. Booths, Whelock Booth, Benjn. Horton, James Horton, John Drake, Ebenzr. Jinins, William Wells, James Wells, Bela Turner.

John Overton, James Overton, Issac Overton, Nathl. Overton, Elton Overton, Nathl. Goldsmith, James Case, Thos. Hutcenson, Peter Danes, Richard Terry, Danl. Terry Junr., Danl. Conklin, Joshua Salmon, Hezkr Besell Coll, Jonathn. Salmon, Selah Reve, Phinehas Baley. Jonathn. Salmon. Nathl. Baley, Joshua Goldsmith, Luther Goldsmith, Joshua Terry, Gilbert Case, Jonathn. Jinins, Hezekiah Jinins, Israel Reve, Fregift Wells, Jonathan Well, Thos. Wells.

Bela Turner was representative from Enfield in the present state of New Hampshire from 1778 to 1781 during the period when the first Eastern Union was in existence.

This petition was filed October 16, 1779. An entry of the name "Turner" beneath the filing on the reverse of the petition would indicate that Mr. (Bela) Turner acted as agent for the petitioners. There is no legislative action on this petition; on November 4, 1780 the land office committee recommended that a township be granted to Bela Turner and Company, 64 in number, and the resolution authorizing the

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grant was adopted November 6, and on August 4, 1781 the charter issued under the name Turnersburg, which was changed to Chelsea in 1788. No name save that of Turner's included in the above list of petitioners appears in the charter.

Apparently no action was taken on this petition; careful research is being made of other Revolutionary documents in hope of locating references to Mr. Storrs and his "stricken flock," but no trustworthy evidence of their possible settlement in Vermont has as yet been discovered.

In June 1782 Mr. Storrs returned to Southold where he was joined by most of his old congregation. For five years he continued his successful work on the North Fork, but his health failed late in 1786, probably because he over ex-

Continued on page 236

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#### John Storrs

Continued from Page 235

erted his frail body during the war. On April 13, 1787 Mr. Storrs resigned and returned to Mansfield where he lingered until October 9, 1799, when he "perished quietly in his sixty-fourth year".

The inventory of Mr. Storrs' estate amounted to some \$2302 and included about fifty volumes of books, some of them medical which Parson John had used in his ministrations to the bodies as well as the souls of his Southolders. His widow may have taken most of these and any manuscripts she considered of value with her when she moved to Trenton, in Oneida County, N. Y. At any rate, no trace of the Vermont petition and property has come to light except that quoted in this document.

The existence of the above petition has heretofore been unknown to people interested in Long Island history. If all the signers except Bela Turner were members of Storrs' parish in Southold, we may now add several names to the lists of refugees compiled by Mather (Refugees of 1776 from Long Island to Connecticut). The additional names are Thomas Prince, John Prince, Joseph Prince, Nathaniel Young, Reek Hoel (possibly this should be Richard Howell), Wheelock Booth, Benjamin Horton, Daniel Terry Jr., Phinelas Baley, Luther Goldsmith, Gilbert Case, Jon-Jennings. Thomas Wells, Joshua Reeve and H. B. Coll (could the latter stand for Hezekiah Bedell, Colonel?).

If these people were refugees who actually did leave Southold with the others, why have their names not appeared on either official or unofficial lists? Did they sneak across the Sound in their own small boats, thus escaping enumeration, as well as the possible confiscation of their personal goods?

Another question concerns

the attitudes and desires of the petitioners. In the fall of 1779 the military situation of the Colonies was anything but bright. Perhaps Storrs and his flock thought their long-term prospects would be brighter in independent Vermont, which had remained practically untroubled after the defeat of Burgoyne at Saratoga two years before. Did the signers despair of returning to Paumanok?

Be that as it may, when the charter for the soughtfor land was finally issued in August 1781 not one Long Island signer accepted his grant. Perhaps, again, the military situation was the determining factor. In Virginia the forces of Washington and his French allies were closing in on Yorktown, which surrendered a month or so after the charter for "Turnersburgh" actually was issued. Probably by the time the Southolders had been notified that their land was ready (if Turner ever did tell them), they had heard also of the decisive defeat of the British. The prospect of returning to Oyster Ponds must have been much sweater than that of hacking new farms out of Vermont's rocky hillsides.

Suppose the signers had actually gone to Vermont instead of back home to Long Island, who would be missing from the North Fork today: The complete answer would reugire an extended genealogical study and would probably include more than half of Southold village's present population, to say nothing of the populations of Mattituck, Greenport and other communities in the township. This is evidenced by the fact that several people who have seen the list have quick'y identified at least one ancestor without refering to any family data.

For instance, Mrs. Stewart Horton of Cutchogue has declared that her husband is a desendant of two petitioners, namely Jonathan Jennings and James Horton. Mrs. Ernest Morrell of Cutchorue is a descendant of Wheelock

Booth; Mrs. Percy Hawkins and the Cutchogue Moores are descendants of Calvin Moore. If such a casual inquiry is so fruitful, what would a detailed, scientific genealogical study reveal?

Long Islanders helped to free Vermont from French and Indian influence, 1755-1760. Long Islanders helped to settle Vermont. It would not be surprising if further research turned up much more information on Long Island-Vermont relationships during the Revolution. Long Islander's "got around" then, as they do now.

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#### Tom the Blacksnake

Continued from page 229

versation and Tom was incapable of locomotion due to the bulge disrupting his usual means and lines of communication and control from head to tail. On she came! I did the one thing left for a man to do under the circumstances. I stepped out of my swim trunks, knowing that if she was a lady she would go away and, if she was not — well, I'd take my chances. She was!

I saw Tom the next weekend hanging around the old water hole just as slick and slim as ever. What a digestive system

he has!

I think Tom is entirely capable of climbing although I have never seen him do it. Several times I have heard a thud in a definite beach plum thicket. It is the kind of sound that the last part of a snake might make in easing himself off a branch on to dry leaves. The head and fore parts in lowering to the ground would be supported by the aft sections engaging the branches. The last part would have to fall to the ground and it would cause a thud.

Some readers will wonder how a blacksnake appeared on Jones Beach. I don't know. Several ways seem possible. Tom may have been dropped experimentally. He may have arrived from the mainland by swimming across the bay from island to island. He may have come in a load of topsoil. I am inclined to favor the latter possibility as thousands of truck loads of soil have been hauled to Jones Beach and several snakes must surely have traveled in that soil.

This writing is September 8, 1952. I saw Tom yesterday afternoon working near the waterhole. His gunmetal color seemed fresh and new, so I am going to look around for another snake skin.

I wonder where Tom intends to bunk for the winter? He requires a place in which the temperature does not drop below the frost line—40 degrees

would be better. He can not possibly survive a freeze. I should hate to have to find a spot on Jones Beach where temperature would hold above 36 degrees when a howling northwester was pouring zero air down out of Canada! No doubt Tom knows right now exactly where he will stay nice and snug and warm all winter—he has probably wintered there before.

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Brooklyn Village, by Ralph Foster Weld, 1938, Illustrated, 360 pages of Brooklyn History, Well indexed. In excellent condition.

Annals of St. John's Church, Huntington, L. L, by Rev. Charles William Turner, Rector, 1895. Illustrated. (From its inception in 1727 to the year 1894.) Fine condition.

Genealogical, Biographical and Bibliographical Notes on the Prime Family, by E. D. G. Prime, D.D. 1888.

Documentary History of the State of New York, by E. B. O'Callaghan, M.D., Profusely illustrated with plates and maps, four large comprehensive volumes arranged under direction of the Hon. Christopher Morgan, Secretary of State, Printed 1849-1851. In fine condition. Very rare, Contains much L. I. material.

Memorial of the Owners and Underwriters of the American Ship, the New Jersey, Philadelphia 1806, Containing book mark of the Library Army War College. A report on ship's capture by French privateer in 1797, and subsequent developments.

Bailey's Long Island History in two large volumes, 1000 pages, 43 chapters, 200 illustrations, 13 separate town histories, L. I. Indians, Aviation, Agriculture, Whaling, Industries, Medicine, Banking, Churches, Geology, Archaeology and other subjects.

New York Considered and Improved, 1695, published 1903 from the original MS in the British Museum, No. 199 of 400 printed copies.

Journal of the Life and Religious Labors of Elias Hicks of Jericho, L. I. 1832, 451 pages. This native son of Nassau County became one of America's leading Quaker preachers.

Select Patents of New York Towns. Frederick Van Wyck. 1938. Illustrated. The Iroquois, A Study in Cultural Evolution, by Frank Gouldsmith Speck. Bulletin 23 of the Cranbrook Institute of Science, 1945.

Old Southold Town's Tercentenary, Ann Hallock Currie-Bell, 1940, 161p.

Prime's History of Long Island with special reference to its ecclesiastical concerns, 420 pages, 1845.

Pirates and Buccaneers of the Atlantic Coast, by E. R. Snow, in six parts, illustrated. 350 pages. First edition, 1944. Tom Masson's Annual for 1923. An Anthology of current articles, essays, etc.

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The Social History of Flatbush, and Manners and Customs of the Putch Settlers in Kings County, Gertrude Lefferts Vanderbilt. Published 1882, 351 pages.

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#### Pamphlets by the Forum

Long Island, Cradle of Aviation, by Preston R. Bassett, president Nassau County Historical Society. The island's part in world aeronautics, republished from Bailey's Long Island History.

First Train to Greenport, 1844, by Dr. Clarence A. Wood, for more than 40 years research attorney for the Court of Appeals, at Albany.

History of the Storms and Gales on Long Island, by Osborn Shaw, Official Historian, Town of Brookhaven; The Hurricane of 1938, by Dorothy Quick, Poetess and Novelist. Limited, numbered edition. Out of print.

History of Setauket Presbyterian Church, by Kate W. Strong, with introduction by the Rev. Frank M. Kerr, Hempstead. Limited number edition of 200.

The Talented Monat Brothers, by Jacqueline Overton, author of "Long Island's Story" and Librarian of the Children's Library, Westbury, with introduction by Harry Peters, art collector, critic, author and lecturer. Limited numlered edition of 500.

Long Island's First Italian, 1639, by Berne A. Pyrke, former New York State Commissioner of Agriculture and Markets.

Streamlining a County Welfare Service, by Edwin W. Waltace, Commissioner Public Welfare, Nassau County.

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Ezra L'Hommedicu, Island Statesman, by Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood. A biographical sketch of Southold Town's famous native son, "Father of the Board of Regents".

History of Patchogue Congregational Church, by Frank Overton, M.D.

The Pottery at Huntington, by Romanah Sammis, O'licial Historian, Town of Huntington For sale by Huntington Historical Society. The Thirteen Tribes, by Paul Bailey. A brief account of the Long Island Indians, including origin, religion, mode of living, habits, customs, and decline. Suitable for use in Social Studies. Illustrated.

History of the Long Island State Parks, by Chester R. Blakelock, Executive Secretary, Long Island State Park Commission. Republished from Bailey's Long Island History. For particulars address author, Babylon, N. Y.

Birthplace of John Howard Pagne, by Dr. Clarence Ashton Wood, Contributing Editor Long Island Forum. A comprehensive presentation of conclusive proof that the author of "Home, Sweet Home" was born in New York City. Limited edition.

A Small Boat Trip to Florida (Winter of 1947-48), by Captain Charles Suydam, Jr.

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Distribution of Wild Orchids on Long Island by Roy Latham, well known authority. Limited, numbered edition. Sold by author, Orient, L. I.

Five Thousand Years of Relief, by Edwin W. Wallace, Commissioner Public Welfare, Nassau County; President, New York Association of Public Welfare Officials.

Tales of An Island and Its People, by Dr. Clarence A. Wood. A group of seven sketches on Long Island's famous horses and horsemen of yesteryear, and other historical subjects.

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#### Letters From Our Readers

Continued from page 214

real link to Long Island. Fred Eldean, Scottsdale, Arizona.

赤 旅 幸

Flew the Sound in 1873

I recently read in a metropolitan paper that the first flight across the Long Island Sound from Long Island to Connecticut took place in 1873. This, of course, must have been by balloon as the Wright brothers did not make their first brief flight in a heavier-than-air machine until 1903. Could you give some information on the cross-Sound trip of thirty years before the Wrights' takeoff, if such a trip did really occur?

Jame F. Wallace

Note: In his chapter on Aviation, in Bailey's Long Island History, 1849, Preston R. Bassett, president of the Sperry Gyroscope Company and president of the Nassau County Historical Society, describes the balloon flight of 1873 from Brooklyn to New Canaan, Ct. It was not a scheduled journey between those two points, however, as the plan of the balloonists had been to cross the ocean in a non-ston flight.

the ocean in a non-stop flight.

Balloonist W. H. Donaldson and
Navigator Alfred Ford, accompanied by Reporter George Lunt of
the New York Daily Graphic which
had financed the venture, were
aboard the big balloon, named for
the newshaper. Rising from Brooklyn at 9:19 a.m. on October 5, 1873,
for the transatlantic crossing, it
was next heard from at New Canana 1 3:00 p.m. where Donaldson
and Ford leaped 30 feet to the
ground, with Lunt landing in a
tree a short time later. The balloon was lost.

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